

# ANSWERS TO FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT MANKATO'S FACE COVERING ORDINANCE

## Why should a face covering be worn?

Wearing masks helps you protect others by preventing your germs from infecting them, especially in situations where you may spread the virus without symptoms. The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) recommends wearing cloth face coverings in public settings where other social distancing measures are difficult to maintain, such as grocery stores and pharmacies.

## Who is required to wear a face covering?

Any individual 13 and older able to medically tolerate a face covering is required to cover their nose and mouth in accordance with CDC guidance when in indoor spaces of public accommodation. All employers of businesses considered spaces of public accommodation must require employees to wear a face covering whenever they have face-to-face contact with the public.

## What is a space of public accommodation?

A business, refreshment, entertainment, or recreation facility, or place whose goods, services, facilities, privileges, advantages, or accommodations are extended, offered, sold, or otherwise made available to the public. Examples include: retail stores, rental establishments, City of Mankato government buildings and buses, service establishments, recreational facilities, grocery stores, markets, convenience stores, pharmacies, drug stores and food pantries.

## How will this emergency ordinance be enforced?

Public Safety plans to ask for voluntary compliance. The first intervention after education and information will be a warning. If non-compliance continues, there's potential a citation may be issued to individuals and businesses.

## What is the penalty for not wearing a face covering?

Individuals may be cited for an ordinance violation (\$100 plus associated court fees). A business would be subject to administrative penalties (\$200 plus associated hearing fees). Licensed business would also be subject to a strike.

## What happens if a person chooses not to comply with the face covering ordinance while inside a space of public accommodation?

An authorized representative of the business or organization may ask a person who is not complying to leave. If individual continues to refuse to leave, public safety may enforce trespassing laws or any other law that may be violated. Businesses and organizations may rely on an individual's statements if they claim to be exempt due to medical, disability, or developmental reasons.

## I cannot wear a face covering. Am I required to prove that?

No. The order does not require documentation or reason for not wearing a face covering. If a business won't allow entry, ask what accommodations they can provide, such as curb-side pick-up, delivery or virtual meeting options. If a face covering cannot be worn, it's important to practice social distancing (also known as physical distancing), stay at least six feet away from others, stay home if your sick, cover your cough and wash your hands.

## When is the ordinance going into effect?

July 10

## When does it expire?

September 5

## Types of coverings

- A cloth face covering fully covers a person's nose and mouth, but is not a medical-grade mask.
- A medical-grade mask means an N95, KN95, surgical, or other mask that would be appropriate for a healthcare or direct patient care setting.

## Face covering tips

- Make sure face covering covers your mouth and nose but isn't overly tight or restrictive.
- Choose a soft fabric, such as cotton knit or use a bandana or scarf if that feels more comfortable.

## Is wearing a face covering safe?

They are safe for nearly everyone. Public health experts agree face coverings are an important tool in preventing COVID-19 and research is increasingly suggesting widespread use is effective.



311 or 507-387-8600  
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**What should I say if I see someone not wearing a face covering?**

Nothing. Some people have conditions or circumstances that would make wearing a face covering difficult or dangerous. Be kind. Provide your own social distance. Contact management if concerned.

**What do I do if I see a clear violation inside a space of public accommodation?**

Contact the manager, business owner or supervisor to report it. Businesses are responsible for enforcing the face covering ordinance.

**What other safety precautions should be taken?**

Wash your hands frequently, cover your cough and practice physical distancing by keeping at least six feet of space between people. More information is available on the CDC website.

**Are there exceptions to wearing a face covering?**

Yes. Each type of setting may have additional precautions in place that should be followed. Exceptions include:

- Children 12 years of age and under.
- Medical conditions that make it difficult to breathe, a mental health condition, developmental disability, or other conditions covered under the Americans with Disabilities Act.
- Individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing or those who care for or interact with a person who is hearing impaired.
- Persons otherwise unable to remove face covering without assistance.
- Eating or drinking in restaurants or places of food service. It's important to be seated at a table with at least six feet of social distance from other customers and to re-cover faces when interacting with persons not at your table or when not seated.
- Attendance at movie theaters and other indoor entertainment venues. Face coverings may be removed when seated in assigned seat along with at least six feet of social distance from other patrons. Re-cover faces when not seated.
- Educational institutions, places of worship, long-term care facilities. Follow guidance provided by each of these institutions.
- County, state and federal offices, or buildings. Follow guidance provided by each of these institutions.
- Settings where it is not practical or feasible to wear a face covering when receiving goods or services. Examples include dental services, medical treatment and personal care.
- Businesses with buildings or portions of their businesses that do not have public access, and by appointment only businesses with no public accommodation space.
- Exercising outdoors or while walking or exercising with other people from the same household. It is recommended to maintain physical distancing of six feet from others who are not your family members.
- Working outside while following CDC guidelines and social distancing.
- Exercising in indoor athletic facilities (fitness centers, commercial gyms, etc.). Wear face coverings when not actively training.
- Organized group or team sports, exercise or other physical activities when it is not practical or feasible to wear a face covering or physically distance.
- Driving alone or with passengers who are in the same household as the driver.
- Swimming in a pool, lake, or similar body of water.
- Giving a speech for a broadcast or to an audience.